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EVALUATION OF THE HOME MANAGEMENT HOUSE

RESIDENCY BY FORMER STUDENTS

by

Joy Wadley Erikson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Home Economics and Consumer Education

Approved:

Major Professor

Committee Member

Committee Member

Dean of Graduate Studies

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah

1977

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Joy Wadley Erikson

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ABSTRACT

Evaluation of the Home Management House

Residency by Former Students

by

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Utah State University, 1977

Major Professor: Jane Lott

Department: Home Economics and Consumer Education

The usefulness of the home management house residence course at Utah State University as perceived by former students was studied.

The sample consisted of 112 students, residents of the home management house between 1967 and 1975.

The instruments used were: a background questionnaire and a management skill usefulness scale. The statistical tests used were the t test and analysis of variance.

The course was rated as being very useful, both personally and professionally by the graduates. It was found that the three variables being tested (professional employment, grade earned from the course and graduate resident advisor) did not make significant differences in the usefulness ratings. The findings also indicated that the course had not become less useful over time.

(55 pages)

INTRODUCTION

In the early part of the Twentieth Century home management was recognized as an integral part of the study of home economics, and scholars began working to conceptualize the field and identify its components. By the early 1960s, the concepts of resources, processes, values, decision making, environment and systems had been identified and were widely accepted as key elements of the discipline (Gross 1975).

Management concepts can be taught in the classroom, but the very nature of the concepts demands that they be experienced rather than merely learned or appreciated. Traditionally, home management house residence courses have been used as a means to this end. Used alone, or coupled with non-resident experiences, they have provided students with opportunities for applying basic management concepts and experiencing the results.

Although the importance and need for application of home management theory has been generally agreed upon, a wide difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of home management houses for this purpose has always existed. Numerous studies have been conducted throughout the years to evaluate the usefulness of the residence course as a management laboratory. As a result of the studies some universities have kept their house facilities and some have expanded them. Others have abandoned the traditional laboratory and substituted a variety of experiences in its place.

Studies assessing the effectiveness of the residence experience have generally been one of four types:

1. Opinions and suggestions were collected from the faculty members at an institution to evaluate their own home management program.

2. The faculty members of other institutions having home management programs were surveyed.

3. Students currently enrolled in different home management programs were tested and compared to determine effectiveness of residence versus non-residence learning.

4. Graduates who had participated in home management programs were surveyed.

Although it would seem that evaluation by former students who had completed the residence course would be an extremely valuable source of information, few studies were found that had surveyed this group. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the usefulness of the home management house at Utah State University as perceived by former students.

Hypotheses

1. The home management house residence experience will be rated as more useful overall by graduates who have been professionally employed.

2. The resident advisor at the house at the time the residency was completed will make a difference in the rating the experience is given by the former students.

3. Those students receiving a grade of A from the course will consider it more useful than those earning lower grades.

4. The student rating of the home management experience will not vary significantly over time.

Definitions

For the purpose of this study the following operational definitions were used:

Residency: Having lived at the home management house for the required half-quarter period.

Resident advisor: The graduate student who lived at the house with the students and supervised the activities there under the direction of a faculty advisor.

Faculty advisor: The staff member responsible for directing the home management house.

Professionally: Indicating gainful employment outside the home utilizing the respondent's home economics training.

Personally: Used in everyday living as the manager of a home.

Very useful: A rating of 4 or 5 on the questionnaire scale.

Useful: A rating of 3 on the questionnaire scale.

Not at all useful: A rating of 1 or 2 on the questionnaire scale.

Non-resident experience: An experience where students gain practical experience in using management concepts in a setting other than the living-in situation the home management house provides. The alternate experiences include field experiences, management laboratories, etc.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Home Management

Home management is not a new idea. References to the duties of the manager of a household date back to the writings of the Hebrews, Greeks and Romans. Aristotle wrote:

Seeing that the state is made up of households, before speaking of the state we must speak of the management of the household. (Barker 1946, Pol. I, 3:1253b,1)

Even though there have been references to home management ever since there were homes to manage, it wasn't until the ten Lake Placid conferences (1899-1908), the cradle of home economics and forerunner of the American Home Economics Association, that home management was accepted as a ". . . vital part of the new movement" (Gross, Crandall, and Knoll 1973, p. 669).

Since that time educators have been busy identifying and defining the key concepts of the discipline. The definition of home management varies according to the author. One of the most popular and useful definitions, as far as understanding home management, is that of Ella Cushman. She expressed it simply as, "Using what you have to get what you want" (1945, p. 202). The "haves" are, of course, resources and the "wants" are goals.

In 1946 a need was felt for a comprehensive description of home management education in the United States and a study was undertaken at the University of Missouri to pursue that objective. All 4-year

colleges and universities having home management programs were surveyed and the following philosophy evolved:

Home management is a way of life; the goals of homemaking have basis in human values; management is a way of achieving the highest values from human relations. The predominant aims in home management emphasize the development of appreciations, understandings, attitudes, judgments and standards that are important for the procurement of good human relations. (Elliott 1948, pp. 127-128)

Other definitions have been more concerned with trying to identify the process or processes one uses when managing than the concepts involved. Nickell and Dorsey (1967, p. 80) referred to home management as the "administrative side of family living. It is the force--the mental work and power--that puts the machinery of homemaking into action and keeps it going." Gross and Crandall (1963, p. 90) have also centered their discussions of home management around the management process which they conceptualize to involve three steps: "Planning; controlling the plan while carrying it through, whether it is executed by the planner or others; and evaluating results preparatory to future planning."

In spite of the varying definitions some consensus emerges. "There appears to be universal agreement that management is concerned with resources and the decisions which families make regarding the use of these resources. That values, goals and standards are a part of management is widely accepted" (Vickers 1969, p. 29).

The nature of home management concepts is such that they must be experienced and not merely learned in the classroom. They need to be put into practice in everyday situations. How this can best

be accomplished is not widely agreed upon. While the use of the home management residence for this purpose has been nearly universal, many factors have caused educators to carefully evaluate the residence course and explore alternative methods of providing laboratory experiences in home management.

For many years home management courses have been the subject of adverse criticism by faculty and students. Although the importance and need for training in home management has been generally agreed upon, a wide difference of opinion has existed regarding the content, manipulative processes and effectiveness of both the course and the house. (Elliot 1948, p. 127)

Home Management Residence Courses

Home management residence courses were first established around the time of World War I, their function being what the name indicated, a "Practice House" for the learning and application of skills in home economics (Gross and Reynolds 1931). The University of Illinois and Stout Institute in Wisconsin are considered to be among the first to have established a residence course. By 1954 it was estimated that such a course was required in about two-thirds of the degree-granting home economics institutions in the United States (Gross and Crandall 1954).

Typically the experience meant six junior or senior home economics students living together for six weeks in a college-owned house. While living there the students were responsible for making the plans and decisions needed for "managing" the house as well as their own activities to achieve personal and group goals. This involved activities

such as budgeting and handling the money, planning menus, cleaning, cooking and entertaining.

Ever since the inception of the residence as a laboratory for the application of management theory, justifications for its existence have continually been advanced by some and questioned by others.

As early as 1929 Judy offered justification for the existence of the residence course by pointing out, "... there is general agreement that residence in the home management house gives to the students an opportunity for participation in managerial problems which may not be gained in any other way" (p. 78). In 1931, Gross and Reynolds proposed that, "... in so far as there can be a laboratory for the social and economic problems of the family, the home management house is that laboratory" (p. 23).

The functions and emphasis of the residence course have been continually modified throughout its history to reflect the changing needs of students and the changing philosophy of home economics. By 1956 the emphasis in the residence experience had shifted from home-making skills to managerial ability, decision making and personal development (Bishop 1956). "As with any course taught by any of a variety of methods, the instructor has a definite responsibility to keep the content up-to-date and pertinent to today's world" (Manning 1973). As objectives and residence experiences have been modified to keep up with current trends, many feel that "... the residence involves a teaching process that can be as relevant today as any method" (Foster 1973).

Ball State University is one place where the home management house residence experience has been very successful and has recently been expanded to a \$198,000 complex located in the heart of campus. The justification offered for the expansion was:

At Ball State University, the home management residence program has provided a realistic internship for home economics majors, has allowed for supervised experiences in developing professional techniques and managerial ability, and has further provided for an indepth experience in human relationships. Because these experiences are vitally essential to the development of professional expertise in the teaching major, we decided to continue the residence program. (Lacey 1973, p. 28)

The question of whether to continue the traditional home management residence program continues to be raised by home economics faculties and administrators in colleges and universities. Numerous evaluative studies have been carried out in an attempt to answer the age-old question of the course's effectiveness. The studies have generally been one of four types, faculty evaluations, information and opinions from other institutions, evaluations by current students and evaluations by graduates.

Faculty evaluations

Several of the studies undertaken to evaluate the home management program at an institution involved gathering the opinions and suggestions of faculty members at the institution doing the evaluating. Marshall University is an example of an institution that changed from a residency course to a non-residence laboratory after such an evaluation. Even though the residence course contributed much to the feelings of personal competence of students, it was not felt

that it contributed to competencies related to home management concepts. Staffing the residence was a continual administrative problem and it was decided that another type of course could be more beneficial in terms of faculty work load, space, and cost of facilities (Vickers 1969).

In 1967 Eastern Illinois University closed its two home management houses and substituted a non-residence home management course which combined laboratory, lecture, discussion, and out-of-class activities. After evaluating their residency course, the faculty decided that a project approach could more successfully integrate home management concepts with activities that would relate to the students' lifestyles and foster the attitude that those concepts were useful in the students' lives. Continued evaluation by the students since that time has supported the view that their "project approach" to home management offers a relevant and useful application of management concepts in a non-residence situation (Hedges 1977).

The faculty at the University of Idaho also recently reorganized their traditional home management residence program after evaluating its effectiveness in terms of the time and money problems and personality conflicts that existed among the students. They decided to discontinue the residence requirement leaving the objectives and content of the course the same. They reduced the program from nine weeks to four, and found the same goals could be achieved in this shorter period, easing personality conflicts and requiring less time and money from the students (Jones 1977).

Other institutions

The data for many of the studies done on home management house residence courses have been collected from faculty members at other institutions having home management programs.

In 1962 Morgan surveyed all institutions of higher education in the United States that granted baccalaureate degrees in home economics and offered a home management residence course. She was primarily concerned with determining the opinions of both students and faculty about the success of the course in terms of value realization and achievement of goals. Among her findings were the following implications:

The home management residence course is one of the few courses in home economics that is concerned directly with values, especially human values. The course is successful to the extent that students are influenced by it to see clearly their goals and values and analyze how family resources may be used to achieve their goals. The direction of influence of the course on students is partly determined by the values which the student herself chooses to exemplify, and partly determined by the policies and practices of the institution and the value commitments of the home management faculty in the institution. (Morgan 1962)

She found that the faculty and students did not rate the values implemented through the home management residence in the same order of importance.

Vickers conducted research in 1969 to measure the effectiveness of residence courses compared to non-residence courses. Through the use of matched pairs of schools, half with and half without residence courses, she examined the level of concept attainment of selected home management concepts through the two types of class organization.

In general the non-residence group had greater improvement scores than the residence group and was significantly more capable in dealing with concepts at the upper levels of taxonomy. This suggests that non-residence advanced laboratory courses may be utilized effectively to provide meaningful experiences for students. The residence group, however, exhibited significant gains in concept attainment at the knowledge and application levels.

This type of research is continuing. One example is the study currently underway at Eastern Kentucky University.

Presently the Department of Home Economics of the Eastern Kentucky University is examining the effectiveness of the home management residence experience. Eastern, like many other institutions, is considering a change in the way home management experiences are offered and management concepts applied.

In order to make an effective and rational choice, we are enlisting the help of sister institutions offering courses in home management laboratory experience in any form . . . If your college or university does offer such a course, we would appreciate your completing the enclosed questionnaire . . . It is hoped that through your help, we will be able to provide a course that better meets the needs of our students and better prepares them to serve the people with whom they will be working in the future. (Giltner and Bardwell 1977, pers. corres.)

Even though other institutions are frequently surveyed for program evaluations, the value of these can be questioned because of the diverse goals and objectives, student needs, interests and abilities involved. It would seem that valid conclusions about the worth of a program at one institution could not be derived from reports of success or failure elsewhere. It is necessary for each institution to determine how its students can best learn to apply classroom concepts.

Student evaluations

Many universities have used input from students currently enrolled in home management programs to determine the effectiveness and usefulness of their programs. These studies have been done in as many different ways as there have been researchers doing them. Some have studied what the students learned, from someone else's point of view, others have assessed what the students thought they learned, some combined these two approaches and others were different still.

The Gross and Crandall "Rating Scale for Home Management Residence Courses," developed as a grading device in the early forties, has been widely used in studies evaluating resident students. Two of the studies that employed the scale were Ferns (1955) and Fukushima (1966).

Ferns (1955) used the Gross and Crandall scale to compare the ratings of students by the faculty advisor, by peers and by themselves. The three groups doing the rating more frequently agreed on aesthetic standards than any other item rated and the peer group consistently rated the student higher than either the faculty or the student herself (Newton 1974).

Fukushima (1966) obtained managerial ratings from the students in her sample by having them evaluate themselves using the "Rating Scale." She then compared the students' managerial rating to the students' interpersonal values, as identified by the students from a list she presented to them. Fukushima found no significant relationships between interpersonal values and managerial achievement.

Osgatharp (1949) evaluated home management resident course students in the areas of duty, skill, social usage and management. She reported that students tend to perform better in the activities where one person is involved than in those requiring two or more individuals to work together. It was difficult for the students to work together because of the differences in the ways they "managed" as individuals. Based on these findings, she suggested that more emphasis be placed on the managerial aspects of group work during the residency. Osgatharp concluded that greater proficiency in this area could improve the group performance ratings as well as enabling students to relate better with the members of the group.

Lee (1967) also evaluated residence course students in selected aspects of home management. Her study revealed positive but not significant increases in learning, as a result of the residence experience, in the eight home management concepts studied: environment, values, goals, standards, resources, decision making, planning and implementing. It is important to note, however, that there was no comparison made with learnings achieved through an alternative non-resident course.

For McConkie's study (1960) 38 students were asked to rate themselves, after they had moved from the house, in the areas of personal relations; planning, preparing and serving of food; housekeeping; time and energy; money management; laundry and the operation and maintenance of major and minor pieces of equipment. These same students were then given ratings by the resident in the same areas of

home management skill. She found that the students consistently rated themselves higher on the checklist than did the advisor. She also found that the students often did not perceive the reality of the house experience. "Too often the girls saw the house as a required place to be while they utilized learnings previously acquired instead of seeing it as a learning experience itself" (McConkie 1960, p. 65).

McConkie also concluded that attitudes about the house experience seemed to be related directly to the grade each student had received at the end of the course.

Strittmatter (1967) compared student self-evaluation of the home management residence experience with the instructor evaluation of the student performance. She found that the students gave themselves higher ratings. The discrepancies were correlated with data on the previous homemaking experience of the subjects and she reported that

Students with the highest standards for themselves and who were rated highest by the instructor rate themselves lower than the instructor, [and] students with the lowest achievement scores rated themselves higher than the instructor and seemed to be unable to recognize the level of their accomplishment. (Strittmatter 1967, p. 56)

Slaugh's research in 1970 was also concerned with self-evaluation by residence students. The evaluations were performed by the students and resident advisor within a week following the conclusion of each group's stay in the home management house. She correlated the discrepancy between student self-evaluation and advisor evaluation with achievement motivation. Her sample consisted of 33 students. The

instruments used were: 1) a background questionnaire; 2) Management Resource Scale, and 3) Litwin Decision-Making Test. No significant relationship was found between absolute discrepancy between student self-evaluation in home management and advisor evaluation and achievement motivation. However, when directionality of evaluation-deviation scores was considered, a significant relationship was found at the .05 level. Subjects who had given themselves higher ratings than those received from the advisor were lower in achievement motivation than were the subjects who had rated themselves lower than the advisor had.

Two studies, Kemp (1967) and Auxier (1967) were based solely on student evaluation of the residence course. Kemp's study was an attempt to determine the students' perception of how successfully the home management residence course met the course objectives, which had been established by the faculty. Students enrolled in the residence course were given lists of learning experiences and were asked to identify those they perceived as being useful in helping to achieve the course objectives. They were also asked to identify which of the experiences listed they had and most often. Her most significant findings were:

- 1) At least 3/4 of the students perceived that all but one of the learning experiences included in the instrument would be of much or some help in achieving the course objectives.
 - 2) Eleven of the items which were perceived by the students as being of most help in achieving the course objectives were also those which students reported having had most often.
 - 3) Fifteen of the items which were perceived by the students as being of most help in achieving the course objectives were not among those which students reported having had most often.
- (Keep 1967, p. 116)

Auxier's (1967) study was concerned with how students evaluated their progress toward the course objectives, established by the instructor, during residency. Over three-fourths of the students believed that the course objectives would be difficult if not impossible to achieve in another type of course. Food budgeting at different cost levels was considered the most worthwhile activity by the students in Auxier's sample who had just completed the course. Students who had been away from the experience for six years were surveyed as part of her study and with this additional perspective the following activities were rated most worthwhile: social functions, overall management experience, group living and meal planning.

Graduates

Perhaps the most valuable source of information regarding the usefulness of the management laboratory would be graduates who have had an opportunity to apply what they had learned through experience in their own homes and/or in a professional setting. Few studies, however, could be found that had used input from this group.

In 1962 Robbins mailed questionnaires to some of the 1957-61 Montana State College home economics graduates and personally administered questionnaires to a group of 1961-2 student wives of the same institution. On the basis of the responses each individual was given a managerial score in three areas: human resource management, material resource management and work simplification. The mean score of the graduates was higher than that of the student wives in all three areas.

Indications were that the home management concepts taught were the most valuable part of the home management training and that the individual task performance was considered less important. Most of the home management principles taught in the home management laboratory had been accepted and were used by the home economics graduates.

The social and economic trends, which have affected homes, have also affected the home management laboratory courses. Changing trends have required that the curriculum be constantly evaluated, revised and broadened to meet the needs of the home economics students today. Dopson (1962) attempted to determine the effect of social and economic trends on the home management residence course to see if the concepts learned in the residence experience had been useful to the graduates in managing their homes. In evaluating the usefulness of the course over time, 74 percent rated the course as the most valuable in the home economics curriculum, 15 percent said that the course was of moderate value and only 1 percent considered it of little value.

Many times the usefulness of the home management residence as a laboratory for applying management concepts depends on the alternative experiences available to each institution in terms of their goals and objectives. Some have found the answer to the problems of a residence in field or non-resident experiences. But these alternative experiences are not without problems, so again it becomes a question of costs and benefits related to the objectives the program needs to meet.

Alternative Experiences in Management

Field experiences

Field experiences have been used for many years as an approach to teaching home management. They have included such things as working with families in their own homes; working with various atypical or special family situations, such as low income, with regard to using resources; and working with and through trained professionals employed by community agencies.

In a study conducted in 1929 one-third of the 68 institutions surveyed had programs taking the student to the problem, conducting field work in the homes in the community (Judy 1929). An investigation in 1949 (Van Voorhis) revealed that of the home economics departments having no residence house, nearly one-third used local facilities to give management learning experiences. In 1965 Furst hypothesized that trends in home management programs were toward laboratory and field experience and away from the home management residence. The findings of her research did not support her hypothesis.

In the 70's field experience was emphasized as a viable alternative or supplement to home management residence courses. Of 295 institutions surveyed through a full-scale exploratory study completed in 1974, 45 percent offered some type of field experience. Approximately half of the institutions with a field experience combined it with a residence course and the other half did not (Mikitka 1974).

Vickers' study of levels of concept attainment in residence and non-residence courses (1969) accounted for the types of activities

carried out in non-residence home management courses across the nation.

Some examples were:

At Arizona State University . . . students record field observations obtained by accompanying a professional caseworker to families with actual management problems. They identify one managerial situation which needs to be improved and prescribe a direction of change. . . .

Students at San Francisco State University participate in shared field experiences in a preprofessional relationship with an organized agency as preparation to working professionally with individuals, families and community organizations. The field experience is accompanied by seminars to analyze the experience. (Vickers 1969, p. 95)

There are many positive outcomes and aspects that can be realized through field experience, but there are also recognized problems with the experiences. One educator expressed the problems she saw with field experiences in her particular school and community at a recent national management conference seminar.

First, there are so many other courses at the university that use the community as a laboratory, there is resistance from some community agencies to any additional involvement with students. Second, as the program grows, the drain on staff time may become out of proportion to other important experiences in the contract. Only a limited number of students have been able to carry out field experiences with low-income families without working with over-burdened community agencies. (Foster 1973, p. 43)

In other locations the problem is a lack of organized agencies to work through and in some the problem is transportation.

Non-residence laboratory experiences

Another alternative to the residence experience is one where students carry out designed management projects in a laboratory setting similar to a home management house without actually living there.

There are probably as many ways these are structured as there are institutions using this approach. A typical example would be the home management program at California State University, Northridge. The home economics department there is experimenting with a non-residence experience to explore the effectiveness of what they call an "eclectic home management laboratory course" (Bailey, Beals and Fonosch 1976, pp. 52-53). Each student is given a packet that contains assignments and supporting materials covering topics such as work simplification, life-style, community, environment, problem solving, meal management and consumer problems. The assignments are to prepare the students for weekend activities held at the home management house later in the semester. Evaluation sessions follow the experience.

Summary

The increasing difficulty of staffing a residence, rising costs of maintaining a home management house, and constantly enlarging enrollments have necessitated the exploration of alternative methods of providing experiences in the application of home management concepts (Vickers 1969). There are, however, also costs in time, energy and money that make some of the alternatives to the residence impractical at some institutions.

Many studies have been undertaken to evaluate home management programs. Some of the surveys reviewed include: Judy (1929), Van Voorhis (1949), Osgatharp (1949), Ferns (1955), Morgan (1962),

Robbins (1962), Dopson (1962), McConkie (1960), Furst (1965), Fukushima (1966), Auxier (1967), Kemp (1967), Lee (1967), Strittmatter (1967), Vickers (1969), Newton (1974), Slaugh (1970) and Mikitka (1974).

The conclusion that can be drawn from the studies reviewed is that there is clearly no "best method" for giving students the opportunity to apply management concepts. Each institution must survey the costs and benefits of the alternatives it has and continually evaluate the results.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Population

The population for this study was the 240 students who had completed the residency requirement in the Utah State University home management house between 1967 and 1975. Questionnaires were mailed to the 183 former students for whom addresses could be obtained. Those who responded to the survey were the subjects for the study.

Survey Instrument

A survey instrument was developed to obtain the opinions of former students as to how useful the residency had been to them since graduation. The instrument was composed of 20 items related to four aspects of the house experience: managing resources, work simplification, working with people, and social usage. The 20 items were arranged on a Likert-type scale. All respondents were asked to rate each item's usefulness to them personally on a 1-5 scale, with 5 being very useful and 1 being not at all useful. Those who had been professionally employed, utilizing their home economics training, were asked to also rate each item's usefulness to them professionally.

Two questions were asked with regard to the overall usefulness of the residence experience and its usefulness compared to other required classes taken by the graduates. Twelve background questions were also included for use in describing the population and in testing the hypotheses (Appendix).

Pretest

The questionnaire was completed by 20 students who had lived at the home management house during 1975-1977. As a result of the pretest responses, changes were made to clarify two questions and two additional questions were added. One inquired whether the experience would have been better if it had been shared with a different group of girls. Another asked about experience living away from home, if any, prior to moving into the home management house.

Testing

During March 1977 questionnaires were mailed to 183 former students. A cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and requesting cooperation accompanied each questionnaire. A self-addressed stamped envelope was also included for the respondents' convenience in returning the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present investigation studied the usefulness of the Utah State University home management house, both personally and professionally, as perceived by former students.

Sample

Questionnaires were mailed to the 183 students who had lived in the Utah State University home management house between 1967 and 1975 and for whom addresses could be obtained. Seventeen of the questionnaires were returned as undeliverable. Of the 114 surveys returned, two were not usable because of incomplete information. One hundred and twelve, or 47 percent of the 240 students who had lived at the house between 1967 and 1975, were the subjects for this study.

Background Characteristics

Tables 1-6 summarize the background characteristics of the sample population. All of the respondents had graduated from Utah State University. The majority of those who had been or were currently employed professionally were home economics teachers (Table 1). A few had been employed as home economists in a business or with the Extension Service. Twenty percent of the sample had been employed at miscellaneous jobs such as secretary, seamstress, clerk, etc. These jobs were not considered professionally employment for this study. Thirty of the respondents, or 27 percent, had never been employed.

TABLE 1
PAID EMPLOYMENT

Profession	Number of respondents	% of sample
Home economics teacher	79	71%
HEIB (Home Economist in Business)	4	4%
Extension	6	5%
Other (Misc. professional)	7	6%
Other (Misc. non-professional)	22	20%
Total	118*	106%

* Some indicated more than one type of employment

TABLE 2
MARITAL STATUS

	Number of respondents	% of sample
Married	83	74%
Not married	29	26%
Total	112	100%

TABLE 3
PREREQUISITES

	Number of respondents	% of sample
Prerequisites at Utah State University	103	92%
Prerequisites elsewhere	4	4%
No response	5	4%
Total	112	100%

TABLE 4
USEFULNESS OF PREREQUISITES

	Number of respondents	% of sample
Prerequisites useful	97	87%
Prerequisites not useful	6	5%
No response	9	8%
Total	112	100%

TABLE 5
PREVIOUS LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Place	Number of respondents	% of sample
Apartment	85	76%
Cooking dorm	69	62%
Non-cooking dorm	12	11%
Relatives	4	4%
Sorority house	6	5%
Had not lived away from home	10	9%
Total	186*	167%

* Some checked more than one.

TABLE 6
INFLUENCE OF GROUP

Better with different group	Number of respondents	% of sample
No	96	86%
Yes	16	14%
Total	112	100%

Most of the respondents were married (Table 2). Sixty-three percent of the husbands were professionally employed, 18 percent were skilled laborers and 4 percent ranchers and farmers. Fourteen percent were students. The average number of children was 1.92.

They lived in all different parts of the country.

Most of the respondents had taken the prerequisite courses at Utah State University. One hundred and three or 92 percent had done so (Table 3).

When asked whether or not the prerequisites had been useful in preparation for living at the house, 94 percent replied affirmatively. Some comments were "Yes--especially meal management," "Yes--particularly the basic management class," "Yes!" and "Yes--very useful!" (Table 4).

The respondents were asked where they had lived prior to moving into the home management house. It was assumed that there is more independent living and responsibility for management in an apartment or cooking dorm than when students live at home, with relatives, in a non-cooking dormitory or sorority house. Only 10 of the graduates or 9 percent had never lived away from home before living in the home management house. Most had lived in an apartment or in a dormitory where they had done their own cooking (Table 5).

The students are assigned to the house according to their preference and the space available. The personalities of the students are not considered. Many students lived with girls they did not select and sometimes did not know previously. The respondents were asked whether living with a different group of girls would have made the experience better. Eighty-six percent replied negatively. Many respondents commented on how much they had enjoyed the group they had lived with (Table 6).

Usefulness of Residence Experience

The second part of the questionnaire dealt with various aspects of the home management residence experience. Twenty items related to the residence experience were listed and the respondents were asked to rate each item's usefulness, both personally and professionally, on a 1-5 Likert-type scale with 5 being very useful and 1 being not at all useful. For analysis, the items were categorized into four groups, each representing an area of management skill (Table 7).

TABLE 7
AREAS OF MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Group	Management skill	Item from instrument
Group I	Managing resources	1--Money management 2--Time management 7--Marketing 12--Keeping financial records 15--Creative use of resources 18--Using personal initiative
Group II	Work simplification	3--Task simplification 5--Making plans 6--Evaluating experiences 8--Organizing work and activities 14--Care and use of equipment
Group III	Working with people	4--Working with others 10--Communicating with others 11--Giving directions 13--Planning meals 20--Becoming sensitive to personal feelings and social situations
Group IV	Social usage	9--Entertaining 16--Responsibilities of being a hostess 17--Correct social usage 19--Learning proper table service

A mean score was obtained for each respondent for each of the four management skills according to the ratings given the items in the group. The individual means were then combined to get a sample mean for each of the four skills. The results of this tabulation are shown in Table 8.

TABLE 8

USEFULNESS OF MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Management skill	Mean usefulness rating
Working with people	3.98
Social usage	3.79
Managing resources	3.64
Work simplification	3.60

Although the ratings for the four management skills were very similar, working with people received the highest usefulness rating. The social usage skill had the next highest usefulness rating, managing resources the third, and work simplification was rated as being the least useful of the four groups. All four management skills received ratings above three, which was designated on the questionnaire as useful. These ratings were similar to those Auxier (1967) obtained. The activities rated most valuable by the graduates in her study were social functions, overall management experience, group living and meal planning.

A rating for each respondent as to how useful the home management residence experience had been, both personally and professionally was obtained, using the individual ratings for all of the 20 items. Professional scores were only computed for those who had worked professionally, not for all students in the sample. A total mean usefulness score was then figured using the individual means. The results indicated that the experience had been slightly more useful to the subjects personally than professionally (Table 9).

TABLE 9
MEAN USEFULNESS RATINGS

	Number of respondents	Mean usefulness rating
Personally	112	3.82
Professionally	82	3.76

A question was included in the questionnaire with regard to overall usefulness of the residence course. The question asked how useful the residence course had been in relation to other required courses the student had taken. The respondent was to rate the usefulness, personally and professionally on a 1 to 5 Likert-type scale. The scores indicated it had been slightly more useful personally than professionally (Table 10).

Dopson found similar high ratings of usefulness in her study (1962). Seventy-four percent of the graduates in her study rated

TABLE 10
USEFULNESS COMPARED WITH OTHER COURSES

	Personally	Professionally
Usefulness compared with other required courses	4.25	3.96

the home management course as the most valuable course in the home economics curriculum, 15 percent said that it was of moderate value and only 1.0 percent considered it of little value.

Hypothesis I

The first hypothesis stated that the home management residence experience would be rated as more useful overall by graduates who had been professionally employed than by those who had not. The responses from the question, "Overall how was the residence experience at the home management house?" were used to test this hypothesis. The responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert Scale. The mean scores of the 80 respondents who had been professionally employed were compared to the mean scores of the 32 respondents who had not been. A t test was to be used for testing the hypothesis. Both means, computed on the basis of the "overall" rating, were 4.09, making it unnecessary to use a statistical test to determine the significance of the difference between the two means. The hypothesis was rejected. Even though there was not the anticipated difference

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in the rating of usefulness for the course by those who had worked professionally and those who had not, the fact that the course was given a rating above four by both groups was interesting and valuable information in terms of evaluating the usefulness of the home management house as a laboratory in management. It can be assumed that the former students viewed the residence experience as having made a positive contribution to their lives.

Hypothesis II

The second hypothesis stated that the resident advisor would make a difference in the ratings given the experience by former students. The hypothesis was tested using an analysis of variance. Sample means were obtained from the total of the 20 usefulness ratings for each group of students living at the home management house under the supervision of a different graduate student (Table 11). The f ratio of 1.95 was not significant at the .05 level of confidence. The hypothesis was rejected. It was, however, significant at the .10 level of confidence.

Hypothesis III

The third hypothesis stated that the students who earned an A grade from the course would consider it more useful than those who earned lower grades. A mean score was obtained from the total of the 20 usefulness ratings of the respondents. This hypothesis was tested using a t test. The difference between the means was not

TABLE 11
INFLUENCE OF GRADUATE RESIDENT ADVISOR

Resident advisor	Year	Number of respondents	% of respondents	\bar{x}
A.	1967-68	14	12.5%	3.53
B.	1968-70	20	17.9%	3.77
C.	1970-71	13	11.6%	3.72
D.	1971-73	28	25.0%	3.73
E.	1973-74	21	18.8%	4.00
F.	1974-75	16	14.2%	3.86
Total		112	100.0%	

significant at the .05 level of confidence. The hypothesis was rejected. The students who received A's had a mean usefulness score of 4.28 compared to 3.59 for those who received a grade of B or C (Table 12). These findings were not consistent with McConkie's (1960). McConkie concluded from her study that attitudes about the house experience seemed to be related directly to the grade each student had received at the end of the course. The students in her study evaluated the experience immediately after receiving their grade which might have affected the findings.

TABLE 12
GRADE AND MEAN USEFULNESS RATING

Grade	Number of respondents	% of sample	Mean usefulness score
A	95	85%	4.28
B and C	17	15%	3.59
Total	112	100%	
t value = .3341			

Hypothesis IV

Hypothesis number four stated that the student ratings of the home management house would not vary significantly over time. A mean score was obtained from the total of the 20 usefulness ratings of the students who had lived at the house during 1967-1969 and for those students who lived at the house during 1973-1975. These two groups represented the two extremes of the time span covered in this study. The 1967-69 group's mean rating was 3.70 compared to a 3.90 rating given the experience by the 1973-75 group (Table 13).

The t test was used to test the hypothesis. The difference between the means was not significant at the .05 level of confidence. The hypothesis could not be rejected. Even though the difference was not significant it was interesting to note that the higher ratings came from the more recent graduates.

TABLE 13
USEFULNESS OVER TIME

Year	Number of respondents	% of sample	\bar{x}
1967-1969	23	21%	3.70
1973-1975	48	43%	3.90
Total	71	64%	

Respondents' Comments

Further insight into the usefulness of the home management house at Utah State University was gained from the comments the respondents made. Space was provided for comments and suggestions and all but 15 of the 112 graduates expressed feelings they had about the experience.

Negative comments

One student out of the 112 respondents thought the experience was a total waste of time and should be dropped from the curriculum. Others found it less than perfect, criticizing such things as the time involved, pressure, grading system, resident advisor and the course structure (Table 14).

Positive comments

Most of the comments were very positive, ranging from "good experience" to "the greatest single experience of four years of college." The comments are summarized in Table 15.

TABLE 14
NEGATIVE COMMENTS

Comments	Number of respondents	% of sample
Requires too much time and pressure	7	6%
Unrealistic experience	3	3%
Resident advisor was a problem	2	2%
Waste of time	1	1%
Too tied down	1	1%
Not flexible enough	1	1%
Same as apartment life	1	1%
Grade made me mad	1	1%
Total	17*	16%*

* Some individuals made several comments.

TABLE 15
POSITIVE COMMENTS

Comments	Number of respondents	% of sample
Most enjoyable class I had	38	34%
Very useful	31	28%
Especially useful professionally	14	13%
Very practical experience	12	11%
Highlight of college	10	9%
Experience couldn't be had elsewhere	8	7%
Great social experience	7	6%
Most useful class I had	4	4%
Gained self-confidence	3	3%
Good experience	3	3%
Special experience	2	2%
Wish everyone could do it	2	2%
Don't change a thing	1	1%
Worth more than words	1	1%
Total	136*	124%*

* Some individuals made several comments.

Suggestions

Several suggestions for improvements were made. Some of them would be difficult if not impossible to implement, while others could add to and improve the course (Table 16).

TABLE 16

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions	Number of respondents	% of sample
More emphasis on keeping financial records	4	4%
Make grade pass/fail	1	1%
Need individual projects to choose from	1	1%
More emphasis on work simplification	1	1%
Less guidance needed	1	1%
More evaluation needed	1	1%
More emphasis on HOW things are done	1	1%
Offer it in the summer	1	1%
Total	11	11%

Memory

Six students expressed difficulty in remembering details of the experience. They found it hard to attribute their knowledge to a specific class or experience. Many more respondents may also have had the same difficulty.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The usefulness of the home management house residence course at Utah State University as perceived by former students was studied.

The sample was composed of 112 female graduates of Utah State University who had lived in the Utah State University home management house between 1967 and 1975. Respondents rated different aspects of the home management house residence course as to usefulness, personally and professionally, on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The questionnaire was developed, pre-tested and mailed during spring quarter of the 1976-77 school year.

Four hypotheses were formulated for testing:

1. The home management house residence experience will be rated as more useful overall by graduates who have been professionally employed. The hypothesis was rejected.
2. The resident advisor at the house at the time the residency was completed will make a difference in the rating the experience is given by the students. The hypothesis was rejected.
3. Those students receiving a grade of A from the course will consider it more useful than those earning lower grades. The hypothesis was rejected.
4. The student rating of the home management house experience will not vary significantly over time. The hypothesis could not be rejected.

The following conclusions may be drawn from this study:

1. The experience has been very useful to almost all graduates but was not more useful to those who had been professionally employed.
2. The resident graduate advisor did not make a significant difference in the ratings the former students gave the experience.
3. The students earning A's from the residence experience did rate it more useful but not significantly more useful than the students earning lower grades.
4. The ratings of the former students indicated that the house residence experience had not become less useful over time.
5. On the average, the students rated the course as being more useful than other courses required for their major.
6. On the whole, the experience was considered to be very useful, both personally and professionally.

Limitations

The following limitations were recognized in this study:

1. Memory. It was hard for those graduates who had been out of school for a number of years to remember what they had learned where and to sort out the results of the experiences they had had in the meantime from what they had learned in school.
2. Sample. Because of the difficulty in obtaining current addresses many of the graduates from the earlier years were not contacted for this study, and a number of students with the lower grades were excluded. This may or may not have influenced the outcome of the hypothesis.

3. Other factors. Many things, that are difficult to measure, could influence the rating of the house experience. Some of these include previous experiences, what was going on in the individual's personal life at the time of the residency, the situation the individual moved out of to come to the house, extra-curricular activities involved in at the time the student lived at the house, what the person did after graduation, etc. Those who did not respond to the questionnaire did not vary in any obvious way from those who did respond except that there was a higher percentage rate of return from more recent graduates.

Recommendations

For future studies of this nature one rating would be sufficient as there were few differences in professional and personal ratings given by the respondents. Utilizing just one rating would simplify analysis.

The findings of this study indicate that the home management residence at Utah State University was perceived by former students as being very useful, both personally and professionally. The evidence warrants keeping the residency in its current form.

As student needs and curriculum goals are continually changing, it is also recommended that the residence experience be re-evaluated periodically.

But until evidence indicates that the residence experience is no longer useful and should be altered or even abandoned for some alternative experience, it is recommended that it be retained.

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APPENDIX



UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY · LOGAN, UTAH 84322

COLLEGE OF FAMILY LIFE

DEPARTMENT OF
HOME ECONOMICS AND
CONSUMER EDUCATION
UMC 29

March 1977

Dear Former Home Economics Student:

With the co-operation of the Household Economics and Management Department at USU I am currently involved in evaluating the Home Management House residence experience as it relates to the training of our Home Economics graduates. I need your input to determine how useful it has been to you both personally and professionally since leaving USU.

Please fill out the accompanying questionnaire, knowing that your responses will be kept confidential, and return it immediately in the enclosed envelope. I will be analyzing the results for my Master's Thesis and since my sample is limited to those who have lived at the House it is crucial that I hear from each one of you. Please feel free to share any feelings or suggestions you have about the experience. We really are interested in making it a useful laboratory in management. If it isn't a meaningful experience we would like to know, so please be honest in your evaluation.

A very sincere thanks in advance for your co-operation.

Sincerely,

Joy Wadley Erekson

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name _____

I lived at the Home Management House _____

Graduate student while I lived at the House _____

Did you graduate? _____

All employment since graduation:

Home Ec. Teacher _____

Home Economist in business _____

Extension _____

Other (be specific) _____

Married? _____ Husband's occupation _____

Number of children _____

Did you take the pre-requisites for the House at USU? _____

Were the pre-requisites helpful in preparing for the House? _____

If you were a transfer student to USU where did you take the pre-req.? _____

Were the pre-requisites taken somewhere else adequate preparation for the House? _____

What other classes would have been useful as pre-requisites? _____

Had you lived away from home prior to living in the Home Management House?

apartment _____

dormitory (did own cooking) _____

(ate at cafeteria) _____

other _____

If I had lived with a different group of girls at the House it would have been a better experience. YES NO (Circle one)

For this study:

Professionally indicates used in gainful employment outside of the home.

Personally refers to use in everyday living at the manager of a home.

Comments:

Please rate the following aspects of the Home Management House Residence Experience in terms of usefulness to you, both personally and professionally. The scale ranges from one, being least useful, to five, being most useful.

Circle one number on each line:

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| 1. Money management | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
| 2. Time management | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
| 3. Work Simplification | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
| 4. Working with others | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
| 5. Making plans | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
| 6. Evaluating experiences | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
| 7. Marketing | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
| 8. Organizing work and activities | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
| 9. Entertaining | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
| 10. Communicating with others | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
| 11. Giving Directions | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
| 12. Keeping financial records | Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |

13. Planning meals
- | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
14. Care and use of equipment
- | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
15. Creative use of resources
- | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
16. Responsibilities of being a hostess
- | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
17. Correct social usage
- | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
18. Using personal initiative
- | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
19. Learning proper table service
- | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |
20. Becoming sensitive to personal feelings and social situations
- | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Personally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Professionally | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| | not at all useful | | useful | | very useful |

In relation to other required courses I had to take, the residence was:

Personally	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Professionally	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
	less useful		as useful		more useful

Overall how was the residence experience at the Home Mgmt. House?

Personally	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Professionally	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
	not at all useful		useful		very useful

Suggestions and comments: